

REMARKS

Claims 1–5 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended. Support for the amendments to claim 1 can be found, for example, at least in paragraphs [0038]–[0040] and [0042]–[0044] of the original specification. No new matter is added. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and prompt allowance in view of at least the following remarks.

Initially, Applicants maintain that the Office Action fails to satisfy the requirements for a 35 U.S.C. §102 rejection. Instead, the below rejections simply allege anticipation of the features of claims 1–5. Second, the below rejections fail to address all of the positively recited features of claims 1–5. Third, the below rejections fail to indicate the portions of the applied references relied on as disclosing the features of the claims 1–5.

In view of at least the forgoing, the below rejections fail to meet the basic requirements of a 35 U.S.C. §102 rejection and are improper. Because the below rejections are improper, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections. However, in order to expedite prosecution, Applicants will address each rejection below, as best understood.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 3 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 3,638,399 (Walker). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Walker fails to disclose or teach the step of "cooling the activated carbon in an inert gas atmosphere," as recited in claim 1. Instead, Walker is directed to the process for the purification of hydrocarbon pyrolysis gas streams (Walker at Abstract). Because it is directed to the process for the purification of hydrocarbon pyrolysis gas streams, Walker does not focus on the preparation of the activated carbon. Walker briefly discusses preparing the activated carbon at col. 2, lines 25–60. However, this portion fails to discuss cooling the activated carbon in an inert gas atmosphere.

Moreover, Walker discusses reactivating the activated carbon by passing a stream of inert flue gas at high temperature through the activated carbon (Walker at col. 1, lines 72–75). Walker also discusses a higher degree of reactivating the carbon by passing a stream of inert flue gas at an even higher temperature through the activated carbon (Walker at col. 2, lines 10–6). However, Walker fails to disclose "cooling the activated carbon in an inert gas atmosphere" in combination with the other recited steps in claim 1.

As Walker fails to disclose all of the recited steps in claim 1, Applicants assert that claim 1 is patentable over Walker. As claims 3 and 5 depend from claim 1, claims 3 and 5 are also patentable, at least in view of the patentability of claim 1, as well as for the additional features the claims recite. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the above rejection.

The Office Action rejects claims 1–5 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over "Control of Micropores of Molecular Sieving Carbon by Impregnation of Hydrocarbons and Heat Treatment," Nakano et al. (Nakano). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Nakano discusses heat treatment of molecular sieving carbon (MSC) carried out at a temperature of 1023 K to 1223 K after heating the MSC at a rate of 10 K/min (Nakano at page 1). Specifically, Nakano discusses two methods for controlling micropore size but fails to disclose in either method "cooling the activated carbon in an inert gas atmosphere," as recited in claim 1. Nakano discusses analyzing the MSC for a correlation between heat treatment temperature, heat treatment time, hydrocarbon concentration, MSC micropore volume and distribution, adsorption properties of oxygen and nitrogen, and mass distribution inside the micropores, but fails to discuss cooling the MSC in inert gas atmosphere. Accordingly, Nakano fails to teach or suggest all of the steps recited in claim 1.

As Nakano fails to disclose all of the recited steps in claim 1, Applicants assert that claim 1 is patentable over Nakano. As claims 2–5 depend from claim 1, claims 2–5 are also

patentable, at least in view of the patentability of claim 1, as well as for the additional features the claims recite. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the above rejection.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Gang Luo
Registration No. 50,559

JAO:KRG/jnm

Attachment:
Petition for Extension of Time

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OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 320850
Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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